

# **NCI Tobacco Control Monograph 16**

## **ASSIST: Shaping the Future of Tobacco Prevention and Control**

### **What is ASSIST?**

The American Stop Smoking Intervention Study for Cancer Prevention (ASSIST) was an 8 year non-randomized demonstration project for tobacco prevention and control conducted by the National Cancer Institute, the American Cancer Society and 17 state health departments. The ASSIST monograph provides the conceptual model, technical assistance and training information, lessons learned and numerous practical case studies of a comprehensive national, evidence-based program that was implemented at the state and community level.

### **What is the goal of ASSIST?**

The goal of ASSIST was to change the social, cultural, economic and environmental factors that promote smoking by utilizing policy, mass media and program services interventions. The four policy strategies are:

- Raising excise taxes to increase the price of tobacco products
- Eliminating exposure to environmental tobacco smoke
- Limiting tobacco advertising and promotion
- Reducing minors' access to tobacco products

### **How was ASSIST achieved?**

The strategies for ASSIST were developed and implemented by state and local tobacco control coalitions using population-based research, public health practices, policy development and media advocacy. The concepts of building on a strong evidence base; designing interventions that will have broad population impacts; changing social norms in pursuit of greater justice; developing strong partnerships based on common goals and mutual respect; maintaining a determination not to be swayed or pushed off target by one's adversaries; and ensuring a serious commitment to evaluation, self-reflection, and midcourse correction were crucial components of ASSIST.

### **What can the monograph tell me about ASSIST?**

Models, insights, lessons learned and case studies about ASSIST interventions are documented throughout the monograph. The editors and authors intend it to be used by program planners, public health advocates and practitioners, researchers, as well as state and local health department staffs to promote positive behavioral changes and advance the following disciplines: tobacco prevention and control, physical activity, obesity prevention and nutrition, cardiovascular disease, and injury and violence prevention.

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